



## MODERNIZING A MAINFRAME TO LAUNCH NEW SERVICES

### Challenge

Modernize aging, green screen applications that house key data, without having to rebuild them from scratch and provide Web-based access to important county records for increased end-user efficiency.

### Solution

Previously, property records were housed in a mainframe application, while related legal documents resided in a separate client/server system—making it impossible to view both simultaneously. Now, the two systems are integrated into one Web-based application, giving users instant access to property information. For realtors, banks, and county residents who needed quicker and more convenient access to property records and related legal documents, the modernization effort has proven to be revolutionary.

### Benefits

- Improved customer service with instant access to property information with one mouse click
- The Web-based system was created in less than 3 months
- Modernizing instead of replacing saves \$300,000 for the county and, consequently, the taxpayers
- The County received third-place honors among counties with populations of at least 500,000 in the 2006 Digital Counties Survey



Tulsa County

Covering an area of 571 square miles, Tulsa County includes Oklahoma's second-largest city (Tulsa) and is surrounded by rapidly growing suburban cities, as well as thriving rural communities.

Get there faster.™

**“Through our partnership with Software AG, we enhanced our existing mainframe system quickly and easily, providing remarkable value to our county’s citizens.”**

Tom Trimble | MIS Director | Tulsa County, Oklahoma

### **Increasing Application Availability**

With a mission that includes “serving each citizen and visitor in the most efficient, courteous, and fiscally responsible manner,” Tulsa County is always looking for ways to improve service. A recent example is a project initiated by Tulsa County’s MIS Director, Tom Trimble. The driving force behind the project was to improve access to property records, housed in a mainframe application developed in 1988, and to simultaneously provide access to related legal documents that resided in a separate client/server system.

According to Trimble, “People are starting to expect more. The greatest amount of feedback we get is asking if we could increase the availability of the applications. Number two is people want to know if they can access the programs using the Internet.” Before this modernization project, Trimble explains, “Access was strictly through a text-based green screen. When someone needed to view the image of a related legal document (such as a deed or a lease), they had to go into a separate document imaging system. Access was inconvenient and some data could only be viewed by driving downtown to the courthouse during normal work hours.” In order to get to the information, continues Trimble, “There were multiple redundant steps involved and it was inefficient for users to go back and forth between the two systems.”

### **Leveraging Existing Assets**

As Trimble and his team began assessing options, they did so with the intent of remaining primarily a mainframe shop. He remarks, “Technically, the system wasn’t broken, so replacement wasn’t justified. We wanted to combine the separate systems running on different platforms into one system. What we liked about the solution we chose is that it provided a way to modernize the look and feel of the mainframe data without having to replace the whole system or even change a single line of code.”

Further, Trimble says they wanted a solution that tied into the county’s larger vision: “To provide cost-effective solutions to our constituents that ultimately provides a one-stop portal, making all county information readily accessible from home or business; anytime, anyplace.”

### **Simplifying Implementation**

With only five people on staff dedicated to the project, implementation of the solution, Software AG’s webMethods ApplinX, was a quick and easy process, with key staff up to speed in a matter of 6 weeks. In fact, it was so easy to connect the data sources that the project’s lead developer had the primary pages up within a matter of hours—“very, very quick,” exclaims Trimble; “Everyone was impressed with the usability of the product.”

In addition to ease of use, the solution has delivered significant cost savings. Trimble estimates that the county saved \$300,000 in developer staff time and software by choosing to modernize rather than replace the legacy system.

Trimble is also happy with the solutions’ security features. “Another thing that we really appreciate about ApplinX is how it added some additional layers of security, such as secure sign-on. And, because the application is available to users in the public library, we also implemented an inactivity timeout.” Further, the system can track the data accessed and the frequency of access. Image encryption ensures that even if an image is cached on an end user’s local machine, it is encrypted to prevent anyone from finding, identifying, or manipulating the image.

### **Exceeding Expectations**

Since implementation of webMethods ApplinX, the end-user experience has transformed from being tedious and time consuming to instantaneous. With information from both the mainframe-based property records system and the client/server-based document imaging system now available from a single portal, access to that information is quicker and easier than ever. “In one mouse click, you can get the information that used to take five green screens to access,” explains Trimble. “People are impressed with the speed, which speaks to

the reliability of the mainframes” he continues. “GUI applications can be slow on other types of hardware. We’re leveraging the strengths of both environments, and at the end of the day we’re better serving the taxpayer.”

In fact, Tulsa County placed third among counties with populations of 500,000 or more in the 2006 Digital Counties Survey, an annual study by the Center for Digital Government and the National Association of Counties. Criteria included more than 100 measurements of online service delivery, infrastructure, architecture, and governance models. Trimble remarks, “The end result performs seamlessly and exceeded our expectations. If you didn’t know that the data actually resides in two separate applications and environments, you would never figure that out. It really works that well.”

## KEY COMPONENTS

### **webMethods ApplinX**

Tulsa County used webMethods ApplinX to integrate mainframe and client/server applications, meeting end-user demands for both increased availability of the applications and a better interface.

### **Software AG Professional Services**

Provided onsite training, enabling Tulsa County to have the modern, unified Web application up and running in 2 to 3 months.

The mainframe application that houses property records was written with the **Natural** programming language and is managed in the **Adabas** data management system.

#### ABOUT SOFTWARE AG

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Our industry-leading product portfolio includes best-in-class solutions for managing data, enabling service-oriented architecture, and improving business processes. By combining proven technology with industry expertise and best practices, our customers improve and differentiate their businesses – faster.

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